

Genome-wide Study of Gene Copy Numbers, Transcripts, and Protein Levels in Pairs of Non-invasive and Invasive Human Transitional Cell Carcinomas*

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Gain and loss of chromosomal material is characteristic of bladder cancer, as well as malignant transformation in general. The consequences of these changes at both the transcription and translation levels is at present unknown partly because of technical limitations. Here we have attempted to address this question in pairs of non-invasive and invasive human bladder tumors using a combination of technology that included comparative genomic hybridization, high density oligonucleotide array-based monitoring of transcript levels (5600 genes), and high resolution two-dimensional gel electrophoresis. The results showed that there is a gene dosage effect that in some cases superimposes on other regulatory mechanisms. This effect depended ($p < 0.015$) on the magnitude of the comparative genomic hybridization change. In general (18 of 23 cases), chromosomal areas with more than 2-fold gain of DNA showed a corresponding increase in mRNA transcripts. Areas with loss of DNA, on the other hand, showed either reduced or unaltered transcript levels. Because most proteins resolved by two-dimensional gels are unknown it was only possible to compare mRNA and protein alterations in relatively few cases of well focused abundant proteins. With few exceptions we found a good correlation ($p < 0.005$) between transcript alterations and protein levels. The implications, as well as limitations, of the approach are discussed. *Molecular & Cellular Proteomics* 1:37–45, 2002.

Aneuploidy is a common feature of most human cancers (1), but little is known about the genome-wide effect of this

phenomenon at both the transcription and translation levels. High throughput array studies of the breast cancer cell line BT474 has suggested that there is a correlation between DNA copy numbers and gene expression in highly amplified areas (2), and studies of individual genes in solid tumors have revealed a good correlation between gene dose and mRNA or protein levels in the case of c-erb-B2, *cyclin d1*, *ems1*, and N-myc (3–5). However, a high cyclin D1 protein expression has been observed without simultaneous amplification (4), and a low level of c-myc copy number increase was observed without concomitant c-myc protein overexpression (6).

In human bladder tumors, karyotyping, fluorescent *in situ* hybridization, and comparative genomic hybridization (CGH)¹ have revealed chromosomal aberrations that seem to be characteristic of certain stages of disease progression. In the case of non-invasive pTa transitional cell carcinomas (TCCs), this includes loss of chromosome 9 or parts of it, as well as loss of Y in males. In minimally invasive pT1 TCCs, the following alterations have been reported: 2q–, 11p–, 1q+, 11q13+, 17q+, and 20q+ (7–12). It has been suggested that these regions harbor tumor suppressor genes and oncogenes; however, the large chromosomal areas involved often contain many genes, making meaningful predictions of the functional consequences of losses and gains very difficult.

In this investigation we have combined genome-wide technology for detecting genomic gains and losses (CGH) with gene expression profiling techniques (microarrays and proteomics) to determine the effect of gene copy number on transcript and protein levels in pairs of non-invasive and invasive human bladder TCCs.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURES

Material—Bladder tumor biopsies were sampled after informed consent was obtained and after removal of tissue for routine pathology examination. By light microscopy tumors 335 and 532 were staged by an experienced pathologist as pTa (superficial papillary),

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¹ The abbreviations used are: CGH, comparative genomic hybridization; TCC, transitional cell carcinoma; LOH, loss of heterozygosity; PA-FABP, psoriasis-associated fatty acid-binding protein; 2D, two-dimensional.

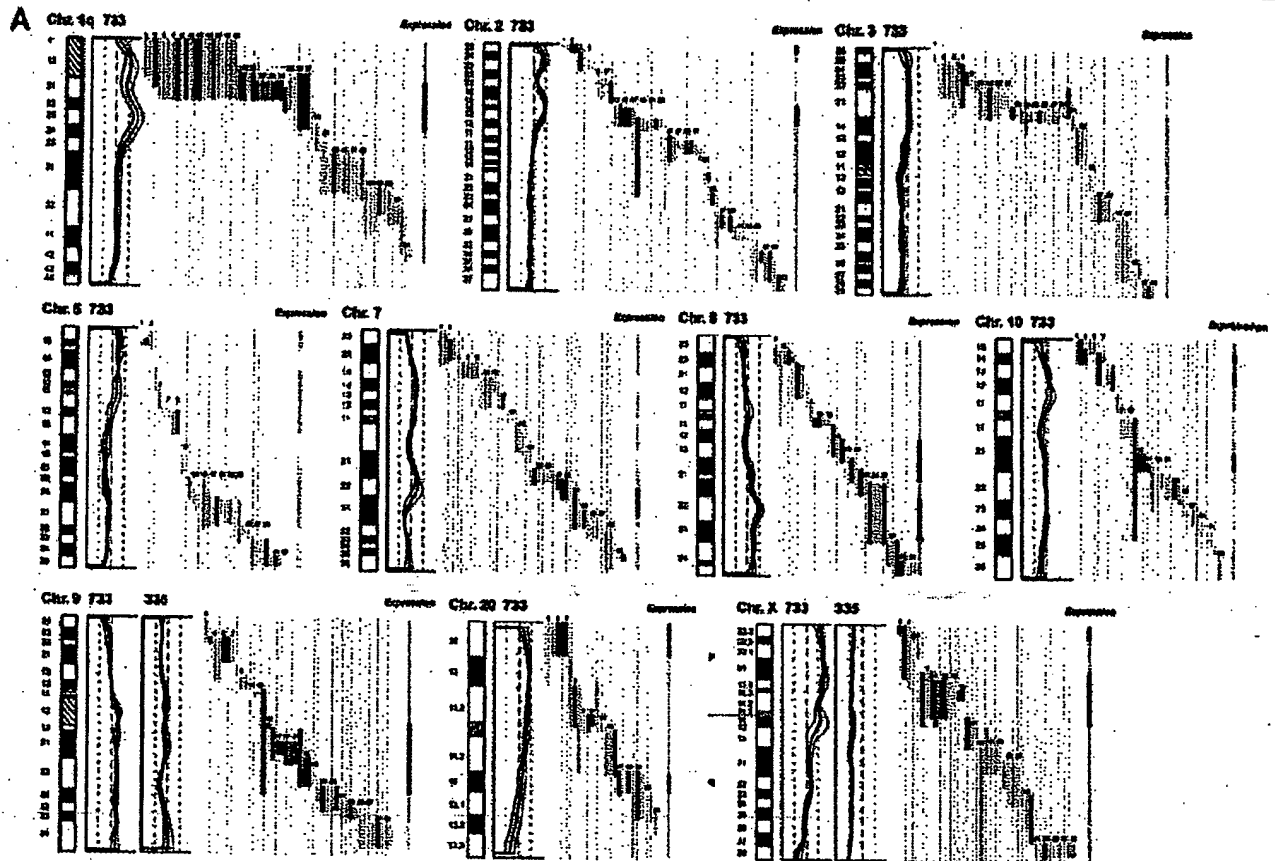


Fig. 1. DNA copy number and mRNA expression level. Shown from left to right are chromosome (Chr.), CGH profiles, gene location and expression level of specific genes, and overall expression level along the chromosome. **A**, expression of mRNA in invasive tumor 733 as compared with the non-invasive counterpart tumor 335. **B**, expression of mRNA in invasive tumor 827 compared with the non-invasive counterpart tumor 532. The average fluorescent signal ratio between tumor DNA and normal DNA is shown along the length of the chromosome (left). The bold curve in the ratio profile represents a mean of four chromosomes and is surrounded by thin curves indicating one standard deviation. The central vertical line (broken) indicates a ratio value of 1 (no change), and the vertical lines next to it (dotted) indicate a ratio of 0.5 (left) and 2.0 (right). In chromosomes where the non-invasive tumor 335 used for comparison showed alterations in DNA content, the ratio profile of that chromosome is shown to the right of the invasive tumor profile. The colored bars represent one gene each, identified by the running numbers above the bars (the name of the gene can be seen at www.MDL.DK/sdata.html). The bars indicate the purported location of the gene, and the colors indicate the expression level of the gene in the invasive tumor compared with the non-invasive counterpart; >2-fold increase (black), >2-fold decrease (blue), no significant change (orange). The bar to the far right, entitled Expression shows the resulting change in expression along the chromosome; the colors indicate that at least half of the genes were up-regulated (black), at least half of the genes down-regulated (blue), or more than half of the genes are unchanged (orange). If a gene was absent in one of the samples and present in another, it was regarded as more than a 2-fold change. A 2-fold level was chosen as this corresponded to one standard deviation in a double determination of ~1800 genes. Centromeres and heterochromatic regions were excluded from data analysis.

grade I and II, respectively, tumors 733 and 827 were staged as pT1 (invasive into submucosa), 733 was staged as solid, and 827 was staged as papillary, both grade III.

mRNA Preparation—Tissue biopsies, obtained fresh from surgery, were embedded immediately in a sodium-guanidinium thiocyanate solution and stored at -80°C . Total RNA was isolated using the RNeasy B RNA isolation method (WAK-Chemie Medical GmbH). poly(A)⁺ RNA was isolated by an oligo(dT) selection step (Oligotex mRNA kit; Qiagen).

cRNA Preparation—1 μg of mRNA was used as starting material. The first and second strand cDNA synthesis was performed using the SuperScript[®] choice system (Invitrogen) according to the manufacturer's instructions but using an oligo(dT) primer containing a T7 RNA polymerase binding site. Labeled cRNA was prepared using the MEGAscript[®] *in vitro* transcription kit (Ambion). Biotin-labeled CTP and

UTP (Enzo) was used, together with unlabeled NTPs in the reaction. Following the *in vitro* transcription reaction, the unincorporated nucleotides were removed using RNeasy columns (Qiagen).

Array Hybridization and Scanning—Array hybridization and scanning was modified from a previous method (13). 10 μg of cRNA was fragmented at 94°C for 35 min in buffer containing 40 mM Tris acetate, pH 8.1, 100 mM KOAc, 30 mM MgOAc. Prior to hybridization, the fragmented cRNA in a 6 \times SSPE-T hybridization buffer (1 M NaCl, 10 mM Tris, pH 7.6, 0.005% Triton), was heated to 95°C for 5 min, subsequently cooled to 40°C , and loaded onto the Affymetrix probe array cartridge. The probe array was then incubated for 16 h at 40°C at constant rotation (60 rpm). The probe array was exposed to 10 washes in 6 \times SSPE-T at 25°C followed by 4 washes in 0.5 \times SSPE-T at 50°C . The biotinylated cRNA was stained with a streptavidin-phycoerythrin conjugate, 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{ml}$ (Molecular Probes) in 6 \times SSPE-T

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TABLE I
Correlation between alterations detected by CGH and by expression monitoring

Top, CGH used as independent variable (if CGH alteration — what expression ratio was found); bottom, altered expression used as independent variable (if expression alteration — what CGH deviation was found).

CGH alterations	Tumor 733 vs. 335		Concordance	CGH alterations	Tumor 827 vs. 532		Concordance
	Expression change clusters				Expression change clusters		
13 Gain	10 Up-regulation		77%	10 Gain	8 Up-regulation		80%
	0 Down-regulation				0 Down-regulation		
	3 No change				2 No change		
10 Loss	1 Up-regulation		50%	12 Loss	3 Up-regulation		17%
	5 Down-regulation				2 Down-regulation		
	4 No change				7 No change		
Expression change clusters	Tumor 733 vs. 335		Concordance	Expression change clusters	Tumor 827 vs. 532		Concordance
	CGH alterations				CGH alterations		
16 Up-regulation	11 Gain		69%	17 Up-regulation	10 Gain		59%
	2 Loss				5 Loss		
	3 No change				2 No change		
21 Down-regulation	1 Gain		38%	9 Down-regulation	0 Gain		33%
	8 Loss				3 Loss		
	12 No change				6 No change		
15 No change	3 Gain		60%	21 No change	1 Gain		81%
	3 Loss				3 Loss		
	9 No change				17 No change		

two invasive tumors (stage pT1, TCCs 733 and 827), whereas the two non-invasive papillomas (stage pTa, TCCs 335 and 532) showed only 9p-, 9q22-q33-, and X-, and 7+, 9q-, and Y-, respectively. Both invasive tumors showed changes (1q22-24+, 2q14.1-qter-, 3q12-q13.3-, 6q12-q22-, 9q34+, 11q12-q13+, 17+, and 20q11.2-q12+) that are typical for their disease stage, as well as additional alterations, some of which are shown in Fig. 1. Areas with gains and losses deviated from the normal copy number to some extent, and the average numerical deviation from normal was 0.4-fold in the case of TCC 733 and 0.3-fold for TCC 827. The largest changes, amounting to at least a doubling of chromosomal content, were observed at 1q23 in TCC 733 (Fig. 1A) and 20q12 in TCC 827 (Fig. 1B).

mRNA Expression in Relation to DNA Copy Number—The mRNA levels from the two invasive tumors (TCCs 827 and 733) were compared with the two non-invasive counterparts (TCCs 532 and 335). This was done in two separate experiments in which we compared TCCs 733 to 335 and 827 to 532, respectively, using two different scaling settings for the arrays to rule out scaling as a confounding parameter. Approximately 1,800 genes that yielded a signal on the arrays were searched in the Unigene and Genemap data bases for chromosomal location, and those with a known location (1096) were plotted as bars covering their purported locus. In that way it was possible to construct a graphic presentation of DNA copy number and relative mRNA levels along the individual chromosomes (Fig. 1).

For each mRNA a ratio was calculated between the level in the invasive versus the non-invasive counterpart. Bars, which represent chromosomal location of a gene, were color-coded according to the expression ratio, and only differences larger

than 2-fold were regarded as informative (Fig. 1). The density of genes along the chromosomes varied, and areas containing only one gene were excluded from the calculations. The resolution of the CGH method is very low, and some of the outlier data may be because of the fact that the boundaries of the chromosomal aberrations are not known at high resolution.

Two sets of calculations were made from the data. For the first set we used CGH alterations as the independent variable and estimated the frequency of expression alterations in these chromosomal areas. In general, areas with a strong gain of chromosomal material contained a cluster of genes having increased mRNA expression. For example, both chromosomes 1q21-q25, 2p and 9q, showed a relative gain of more than 100% in DNA copy number that was accompanied by increased mRNA expression levels in the two tumor pairs (Fig. 1). In most cases, chromosomal gains detected by CGH were accompanied by an increased level of transcripts in both TCCs 733 (77%) and 827 (80%) (Table I, top). Chromosomal losses, on the other hand, were not accompanied by decreased expression in several cases, and were often registered as having unaltered RNA levels (Table I, top). The inability to detect RNA expression changes in these cases was not because of fewer genes mapping to the lost regions (data not shown).

In the second set of calculations we selected expression alterations above 2-fold as the independent variable and estimated the frequency of CGH alterations in these areas. As above, we found that increased transcript expression correlated with gain of chromosomal material (TCC 733, 69% and TCC 827, 59%), whereas reduced expression was often detected in areas with unaltered CGH ratios (Table I, bottom). Furthermore, as a control we looked at areas with no alter-

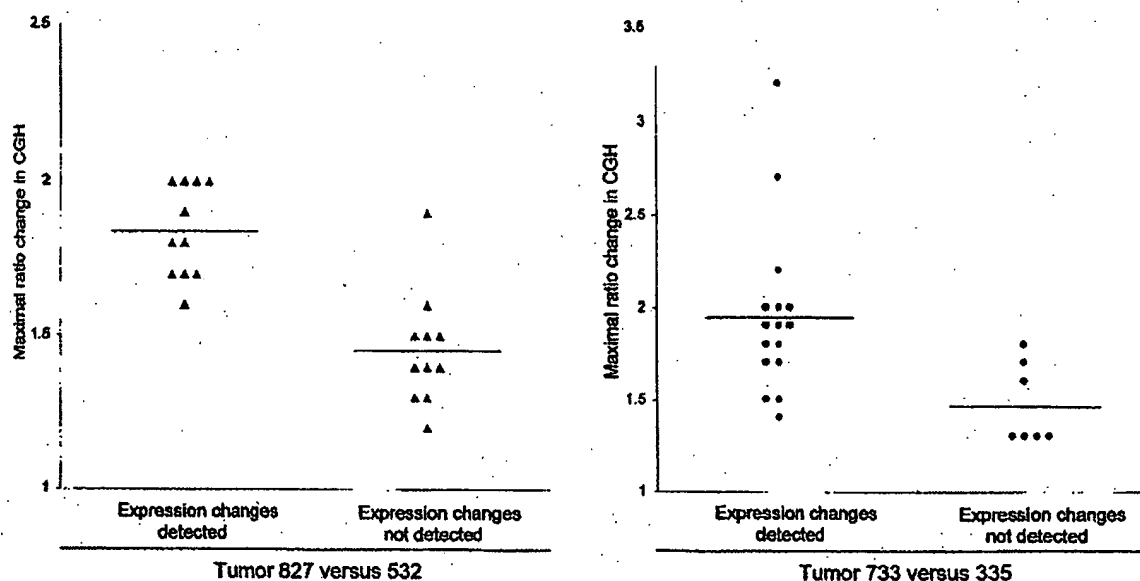


Fig. 2. Correlation between maximum CGH aberration and the ability to detect expression change by oligonucleotide array monitoring. The aberration is shown as a numerical -fold change in ratio between invasive tumors 827 (▲) and 733 (◆) and their non-invasive counterparts 532 and 335. The expression change was taken from the *Expression* line to the *right* in Fig. 1, which depicts the resulting expression change for a given chromosomal region. At least half of the mRNAs from a given region have to be either up- or down-regulated to be scored as an expression change. All chromosomal arms in which the CGH ratio plus or minus one standard deviation was outside the ratio value of one were included.

ation in expression. No alteration was detected by CGH in most of these areas (TCC 733, 60% and TCC 827, 81%; see Table I, *bottom*). Because the ability to observe reduced or increased mRNA expression clustering to a certain chromosomal area clearly reflected the extent of copy number changes, we plotted the maximum CGH aberrations in the regions showing CGH changes against the ability to detect a change in mRNA expression as monitored by the oligonucleotide arrays (Fig. 2). For both tumors TCC 733 ($p < 0.015$) and TCC 827 ($p < 0.00003$) a highly significant correlation was observed between the level of CGH ratio change (reflecting the DNA copy number) and alterations detected by the array based technology (Fig. 2). Similar data were obtained when areas with altered expression were used as independent variables. These areas correlated best with CGH when the CGH ratio deviated 1.6- to 2.0-fold (Table I, *bottom*) but mostly did not at lower CGH deviations. These data probably reflect that loss of an allele may only lead to a 50% reduction in expression level, which is at the cut-off point for detection of expression alterations. Gain of chromosomal material can occur to a much larger extent.

Microsatellite-based Detection of Minor Areas of Losses—In TCC 733, several chromosomal areas exhibiting DNA amplification were preceded or followed by areas with a normal CGH but reduced mRNA expression (see Fig. 1, TCC 733 chromosome 1q32, 2p21, and 7q21 and q32, 9q34, and 10q22). To determine whether these results were because of undetected loss of chromosomal material in these regions or

because of other non-structural mechanisms regulating transcription, we examined two microsatellites positioned at chromosome 1q25–32 and two at chromosome 2p22. Loss of heterozygosity (LOH) was found at both 1q25 and at 2p22 indicating that minor deleted areas were not detected with the resolution of CGH (Fig. 3). Additionally, chromosome 2p in TCC 733 showed a CGH pattern of gain/no change/gain of DNA that correlated with transcript increase/decrease/increase. Thus, for the areas showing increased expression there was a correlation with the DNA copy number alterations (Fig. 1A). As indicated above, the mRNA decrease observed in the middle of the chromosomal gain was because of LOH, implying that one of the mechanisms for mRNA down-regulation may be regions that have undergone smaller losses of chromosomal material. However, this cannot be detected with the resolution of the CGH method.

In both TCC 733 and TCC 827, the telomeric end of chromosome 11p showed a normal ratio in the CGH analysis; however, clusters of five and three genes, respectively, lost their expression. Two microsatellites (D11S1760, D11S922) positioned close to MUC2, IGF2, and cathepsin D indicated LOH as the most likely mechanism behind the loss of expression (data not shown).

A reduced expression of mRNA observed in TCC 733 at chromosomes 3q24, 11p11, 12p12.2, 12q21.1, and 16q24 and in TCC 827 at chromosome 11p15.5, 12p11, 15q11.2, and 18q12 was also examined for chromosomal losses using microsatellites positioned as close as possible to the gene loci

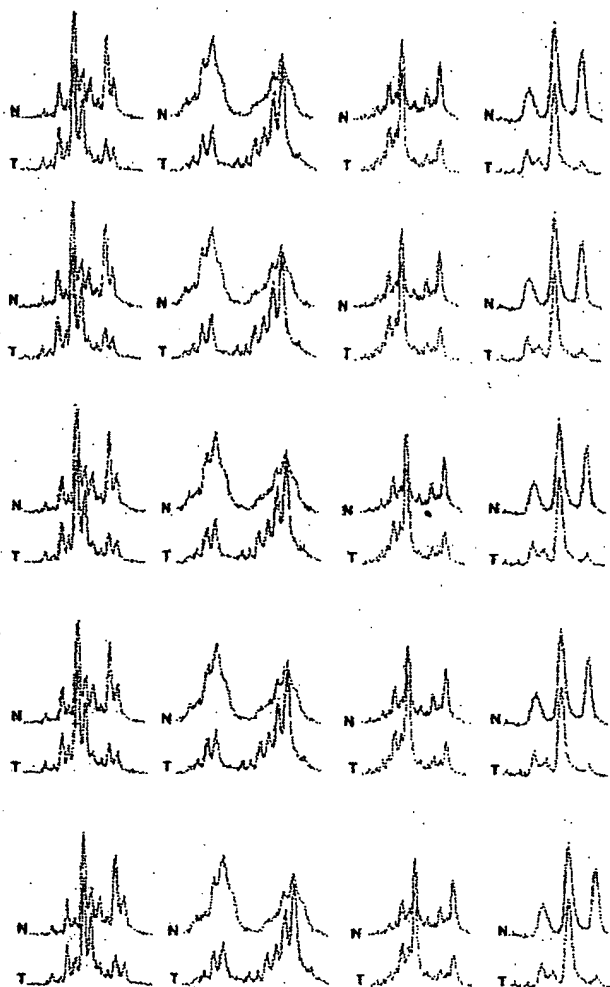


Fig. 3. Microsatellite analysis of loss of heterozygosity. Tumor 733 showing loss of heterozygosity at chromosome 1q25, detected (a) by D1S215 close to Hu class I histocompatibility antigen (gene number 38 in Fig. 1), (b) by D1S2735 close to cathepsin E (gene number 41 in Fig. 1), and (c) at chromosome 2p23 by D2S2251 close to general β -spectrin (gene number 11 on Fig. 1) and of (d) tumor 827 showing loss of heterozygosity at chromosome 18q12 by S18S1118 close to mitochondrial 3-oxoacyl-coenzyme A thiolase (gene number 12 in Fig. 1). The upper curves show the electropherogram obtained from normal DNA from leukocytes (N), and the lower curves show the electropherogram from tumor DNA (T). In all cases one allele is partially lost in the tumor amplicon.

showing reduced mRNA transcripts. Only the microsatellite positioned at 18q12 showed LOH (Fig. 3), suggesting that transcriptional down-regulation of genes in the other regions may be controlled by other mechanisms.

Relation between Changes in mRNA and Protein Levels—2D-PAGE analysis, in combination with Coomassie Brilliant Blue and/or silver staining, was carried out on all four tumors using fresh biopsy material. 40 well resolved abundant known proteins migrating in areas away from the edges of the pH

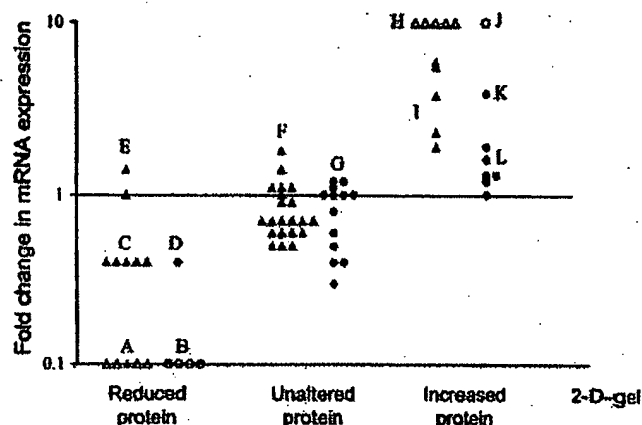


Fig. 4. Correlation between protein levels as judged by 2D-PAGE and transcript ratio. For comparison proteins were divided in three groups, unaltered in level or up- or down-regulated (horizontal axis). The mRNA ratio as determined by oligonucleotide arrays was plotted for each gene (vertical axis). ▲, mRNAs that were scored as present in both tumors used for the ratio calculation; △, mRNAs that were scored as absent in the invasive tumors (along horizontal axis) or as absent in non-invasive reference (top of figure). Two different scalings were used to exclude scaling as a confounder, TCCs 827 and 532 (▲▲) were scaled with background suppression, and TCCs 733 and 335 (●●) were scaled without suppression. Both comparisons showed highly significant ($p < 0.005$) differences in mRNA ratios between the groups. Proteins shown were as follows: Group A (from left), phosphoglucomutase 1, glutathione transferase class μ number 4, fatty acid-binding protein homologue, cytochrome 15, and cytochrome 13; B (from left), fatty acid-binding protein homologue, 28-kDa heat shock protein, cytochrome 13, and calyculin; C (from left), α -enolase, hnRNP B1, 28-kDa heat shock protein, 14-3-3- ϵ , and pre-mRNA splicing factor; D, mesothelial keratin K7 (type II); E (from top), glutathione S-transferase- π and mesothelial keratin K7 (type II); F (from top and left), adenyl cyclase-associated protein, E-cadherin, keratin 19, calgizzarin, phosphoglycerate mutase, annexin IV, cytoskeletal γ -actin, hnRNP A1, integral membrane protein calnexin (IP90), hnRNP H, brain-type clathrin light chain- α , hnRNP F, 70-kDa heat shock protein, heterogeneous nuclear ribonucleoprotein A/B, translationally controlled tumor protein, liver glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase, keratin 8, aldehyde reductase, and Na,K-ATPase β -1 subunit; G, (from top and left), TCP20, calgizzarin, 70-kDa heat shock protein, calnexin, hnRNP H, cytochrome 15, ATP synthase, keratin 19, triosephosphate isomerase, hnRNP F, liver glyceraldehyde-3-phosphatase dehydrogenase, glutathione S-transferase- π , and keratin 8; H (from left), plasma gelsolin, autoantigen calreticulin, thioredoxin, and NAD $^{+}$ -dependent 15 hydroxyprostaglandin dehydrogenase; I (from top), prolidyl 4-hydroxylase β -subunit, cytochrome 20, cytochrome 17, prohibitin, and fructose 1,6-bisphosphatase; J annexin II; K, annexin IV; L (from top and left), 90-kDa heat shock protein, prolidyl 4-hydroxylase β -subunit, α -enolase, GRP 78, cyclophilin, and cofilin.

gradient, and having a known chromosomal location, were selected for analysis in the TCC pair 827/532. Proteins were identified by a combination of methods (see "Experimental Procedures"). In general there was a highly significant correlation ($p < 0.005$) between mRNA and protein alterations (Fig. 4). Only one gene showed disagreement between transcript alteration and protein alteration. Except for a group of cyto-

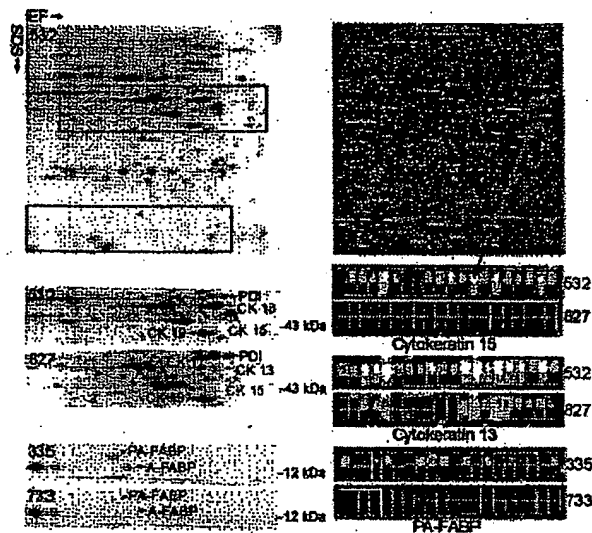


FIG. 5. Comparison of protein and transcript levels in invasive and non-invasive TCCs. The upper part of the figure shows a 2D gel (left) and the oligonucleotide array (right) of TCC 532. The red rectangles on the upper gel highlight the areas that are compared below. Identical areas of 2D gels of TCCs 532 and 827 are shown below. Clearly, cytokeratins 13 and 15 are strongly down-regulated in TCC 827 (red annotation). The tile on the array containing probes for cytokeratin 15 is enlarged below the array (red arrow) from TCC 532 and is compared with TCC 827. The upper row of squares in each tile corresponds to perfect match probes; the lower row corresponds to mismatch probes containing a mutation (used for correction for unspecific binding). Absence of signal is depicted as black, and the higher the signal the lighter the color. A high transcript level was detected in TCC 532 (6151 units) whereas a much lower level was detected in TCC 827 (absence of signals). For cytokeratin 13, a high transcript level was also present in TCC 532 (15659 units), and a much lower level was present in TCC 827 (623 units). The 2D gels at the bottom of the figure (left) show levels of PA-FABP and adipocyte-FABP in TCCs 335 and 733 (invasive), respectively. Both proteins are down-regulated in the invasive tumor. To the right we show the array tiles for the PA-FABP transcript. A medium transcript level was detected in the case of TCC 335 (1277 units) whereas very low levels were detected in TCC 733 (166 units). IEF, isoelectric focusing.

keratins encoded by genes on chromosome 17 (Fig. 5) the analyzed proteins did not belong to a particular family. 26 well focused proteins whose genes had a known chromosomal location were detected in TCCs 733 and 335, and of these 19 correlated ($p < 0.005$) with the mRNA changes detected using the arrays (Fig. 4). For example, PA-FABP was highly expressed in the non-invasive TCC 335 but lost in the invasive counterpart (TCC 733; see Fig. 5). The smaller number of proteins detected in both 733 and 335 was because of the smaller size of the biopsies that were available.

11 chromosomal regions where CGH showed aberrations that corresponded to the changes in transcript levels also showed corresponding changes in the protein level (Table II). These regions included genes that encode proteins that are found to be frequently altered in bladder cancer, namely cytokeratins 17 and 20, annexins II and IV, and the fatty acid-binding proteins PA-FABP and FBP1. Four of these proteins were encoded by genes in chromosome 17q, a frequently amplified chromosomal area in invasive bladder cancers.

DISCUSSION

Most human cancers have abnormal DNA content, having lost some chromosomal parts and gained others. The present study provides some evidence as to the effect of these gains and losses on gene expression in two pairs of non-invasive and invasive TCCs using high throughput expression arrays and proteomics, in combination with CGH. In general, the results showed that there is a clear individual regulation of the mRNA expression of single genes, which in some cases was superimposed by a DNA copy number effect. In most cases, genes located in chromosomal areas with gains often exhibited increased mRNA expression, whereas areas showing losses showed either no change or a reduced mRNA expression. The latter might be because of the fact that losses most often are restricted to loss of one allele, and the cut-off point for detection of expression alterations was a 2-fold change, thus being at the border of detection. In several cases, how-

TABLE II
Proteins whose expression level correlates with both mRNA and gene dose changes

Protein	Chromosomal location	Tumor TCC	CGH alteration	Transcript alteration ^a	Protein alteration
Annexin II	1q21	733	Gain	Abs to Pres ^a	Increase
Annexin IV	2p13	733	Gain	3.9-Fold up	Increase
Cytokeratin 17	17q12-q21	827	Gain	3.8-Fold up	Increase
Cytokeratin 20	17q21.1	827	Gain	5.6-Fold up	Increase
(PA)-FABP	8q21.2	827	Loss	10-Fold down	Decrease
FBP1	9q22	827	Gain	2.3-Fold up	Increase
Plasma gelsolin	9q31	827	Gain	Abs to Pres	Increase
Heat shock protein 28	15q12-q13	827	Loss	2.5-Fold up	Decrease
Prohibitin	17q21	827/733	Gain	3.7-/2.5-Fold up ^b	Increase
Prolyl-4-hydroxyl	17q25	827/733	Gain	5.7-/1.6-Fold up	Increase
hnRNPA1	7p15	827	Loss	2.5-Fold down	Decrease

^a Abs, absent; Pres, present.

^b In cases where the corresponding alterations were found in both TCCs 827 and 733 these are shown as 827/733.

ever, an increase or decrease in DNA copy number was associated with *de novo* occurrence or complete loss of transcript, respectively. Some of these transcripts could not be detected in the non-invasive tumor but were present at relatively high levels in areas with DNA amplifications in the invasive tumors (e.g. in TCC 733 transcript from cellular ligand of annexin II gene (chromosome 1q21) from absent to 2670 arbitrary units; in TCC 827 transcript from small proline-rich protein 1 gene (chromosome 1q12-q21.1) from absent to 1326 arbitrary units). It may be anticipated from these data that significant clustering of genes with an increased expression to a certain chromosomal area indicates an increased likelihood of gain of chromosomal material in this area.

Considering the many possible regulatory mechanisms acting at the level of transcription, it seems striking that the gene dose effects were so clearly detectable in gained areas. One hypothetical explanation may lie in the loss of controlled methylation in tumor cells (17-19). Thus, it may be possible that in chromosomes with increased DNA copy numbers two or more alleles could be demethylated simultaneously leading to a higher transcription level, whereas in chromosomes with losses the remaining allele could be partly methylated, turning off the process (20, 21). A recent report has documented a ploidy regulation of gene expression in yeast, but in this case all the genes were present in the same ratio (22), a situation that is not analogous to that of cancer cells, which show marked chromosomal aberrations, as well as gene dosage effects.

Several CGH studies of bladder cancer have shown that some chromosomal aberrations are common at certain stages of disease progression, often occurring in more than 1 of 3 tumors. In pTa tumors, these include 9p-, 9q-, 1q+, Y- (2, 6), and in pT1 tumors, 2q-, 11p-, 11q-, 1q+, 5p+, 8q+, 17q+, and 20q+ (2-4, 6, 7). The pTa tumors studied here showed similar aberrations such as 9p- and 9q22-q33- and 9q- and Y-, respectively. Likewise, the two minimal invasive pT1 tumors showed aberrations that are commonly seen at that stage, and TCC 827 had a remarkable resemblance to the commonly seen pattern of losses and gains, such as 1q22-24 amplification (seen in both tumors); 11q14-q22 loss, the latter often linked to 17q+ (both tumors), and 1q+ and 9p-, often linked to 20q+ and 11q13+ (both tumors) (7-9). These observations indicate that the pairs of tumors used in this study exhibit chromosomal changes observed in many tumors, and therefore the findings could be of general importance for bladder cancer.

Considering that the mapping resolution of CGH is of about 20 megabases it is only possible to get a crude picture of chromosomal instability using this technique. Occasionally, we observed reduced transcript levels close to or inside regions with increased copy numbers. Analysis of these regions by positioning heterozygous microsatellites as close as possible to the locus showing reduced gene expression revealed loss of heterozygosity in several cases. It seems likely that multiple and different events occur along each chromosomal

arm and that the use of cDNA microarrays for analysis of DNA copy number changes will reach a resolution that can resolve these changes, as has recently been proposed (2). The outlier data were not more frequent at the boundaries of the CGH aberrations. At present we do not know the mechanism behind chromosomal aneuploidy and cannot predict whether chromosomal gains will be transcribed to a larger extent than the two native alleles. A mechanism as genetic imprinting has an impact on the expression level in normal cells and is often reduced in tumors. However, the relation between imprinting and gain of chromosomal material is not known.

We regard it as a strength of this investigation that we were able to compare invasive tumors to benign tumors rather than to normal urothelium, as the tumors studied were biologically very close and probably may represent successive steps in the progression of bladder cancer. Despite the limited amount of fresh tissue available it was possible to apply three different state of the art methods. The observed correlation between DNA copy number and mRNA expression is remarkable when one considers that different pieces of the tumor biopsies were used for the different sets of experiments. This indicates that bladder tumors are relatively homogenous, a notion recently supported by CGH and LOH data that showed a remarkable similarity even between tumors and distant metastasis (10, 23).

In the few cases analyzed, mRNA and protein levels showed a striking correspondence although in some cases we found discrepancies that may be attributed to translational regulation, post-translational processing, protein degradation, or a combination of these. Some transcripts belong to undertranslated mRNA pools, which are associated with few translationally inactive ribosomes; these pools, however, seem to be rare (24). Protein degradation, for example, may be very important in the case of polypeptides with a short half-life (e.g. signaling proteins). A poor correlation between mRNA and protein levels was found in liver cells as determined by arrays and 2D-PAGE (25), and a moderate correlation was recently reported by Ideker *et al.* (26) in yeast.

Interestingly, our study revealed a much better correlation between gained chromosomal areas and increased mRNA levels than between loss of chromosomal areas and reduced mRNA levels. In general, the level of CGH change determined the ability to detect a change in transcript. One possible explanation could be that by losing one allele the change in mRNA level is not so dramatic as compared with gain of material, which can be rather unlimited and may lead to a severalfold increase in gene copy number resulting in a much higher impact on transcript level. The latter would be much easier to detect on the expression arrays as the cut-off point was placed at a 2-fold level so as not to be biased by noise on the array. Construction of arrays with a better signal to noise ratio may in the future allow detection of lesser than 2-fold alterations in transcript levels, a feature that may facilitate the analysis of the effect of loss of chromosomal areas on transcript levels.

In eleven cases we found a significant correlation between DNA copy number, mRNA expression, and protein level. Four of these proteins were encoded by genes located at a frequently amplified area in chromosome 17q. Whether DNA copy number is one of the mechanisms behind alteration of these eleven proteins is at present unknown and will have to be proved by other methods using a larger number of samples. One factor making such studies complicated is the large extent of protein modification that occurs after translation, requiring immunoidentification and/or mass spectrometry to correctly identify the proteins in the gels.

In conclusion, the results presented in this study exemplify the large body of knowledge that may be possible to gather in the future by combining state of the art techniques that follow the pathway from DNA to protein (26). Here, we used a traditional chromosomal CGH method, but in the future high resolution CGH based on microarrays with many thousand radiation hybrid-mapped genes will increase the resolution and information derived from these types of experiments (2). Combined with expression arrays analyzing transcripts derived from genes with known locations, and 2D gel analysis to obtain information at the post-translational level, a clearer and more developed understanding of the tumor genome will be forthcoming.

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